amazes me and remains foreign to me! I cannot, I have never been able to, rewrite a sentence later; all the work that I put on it must be when it is still in a molten state; and each sentence strikes me as perfect only when retouching has become impossible.

Maurice Denis is putting the finishing touches on bis decorations for Boucher's anteroom. I like seeing him in a smock like an ordinary workman. . . . He is softening the oversuave pinks of his clouds, sobering down and toning up his harmonies. This will never be one of his best compositions, but there are successful bits in the foreground. Will Maurice Denis now learn to work a little less facilely? , . . But his facility, after all, is but one of the signs of his health.

He is getting ready to accompany me to Berlin for the opening of my *Roi Candaule* and tells me his joy in the most charming way. I cannot say that my feelings for Maurice Denis are very lively and yet his cordiality and esteem are always very pleasant to me. His health comforts me, and his rather crude but never unintelligent judgments. If I had nothing but friends like him, my sensitivity could find expression only in my books; but at least I should *write* those books.

I meet Thadee Natanson at the Sickert exhibit, where, awkward and lumpish, I do and say the wrong thing; a flatterer in spite of myself like someone who, recognizing his remarks to be without savor, sugars and sugars again to give them at least some sweetness. The Walter Sickert exhibit is gloomy to the point of defying the public; and I like this. Absurd conversation with Thadee. Through fatigue I let myself say the sort of things that, if written, I should cross out in shame. I assume in his eyes the appearance of "complaining" (the appearance people least forgive—which I forgive myself least). So why should I speak of the si-

lence surrounding me to someone who, if he had three lives, could never understand that I am the one *who created* this silence around ine. I tell Thadee that not the *Ermitage,* nor *Vers et Prose* nor the *Occident,* all friendly reviews, has said a word about my *Amyntas. I* should have liked him to understand that I did *not want* any articles where praise was almost obligatory. But Thadee begins at once to console ine! I leave him to ruminate at length the sort of anguish in which you are left By the awareness of having put yourself in a bad posture. I say *bad posture" since the *beauty* of this attitude will matter only if I have the courage (and the strength) to maintain it consistently. And I am wrong to speak in this connection of an *attitude* without adding immediately: *netfwrd>* for it is only when I deviate from it that I deform myself and shrivel up; and I never deviate from it except when I am tired.

Bad sleep last night. I endlessly chew the cud of these thoughts like a betel nut whose bitterness will never be exhausted.